

<!-- /* Style Definitions */ p.MsoNormal, li.MsoNormal, div.MsoNormal {mso-style-parent:""; margin:0in; margin-bottom:.0001pt; mso-pagination:widow-orphan; font-size:12.0pt; font-family:"Times New Roman"; mso-fareast-font-family:"Times New Roman";} @page Section1 {size:8.5in 11.0in; margin:1.0in 1.25in 1.0in 1.25in; mso-header-margin:.5in; mso-footer-margin:.5in; mso-paper-source:0;} div.Section1 {page:Section1;} -->

Washington, DC –Congresswoman Betty McCollum (MN-04), co-chair of the Congressional Mentoring Caucus today introduced a resolution to designate January 2010 as National Mentoring Month, along with U.S. Representatives Susan Davis and Mike Rogers.

“Because we continue to face tremendous demand for caring mentors for America’s youth, this resolution is particularly important. Mentoring Month is an opportunity to recognize the positive impact of mentoring, recruit new volunteers and honor the contributions of the millions of mentors and organizations across the country that empower our youth,” Congresswoman McCollum said.

There are more than 4,700 mentoring programs in communities across the United States. Research shows that these formal interactions go a long way to enhance the competence and character of the mentee and also promotes positive outcomes, such as improved academic achievement and improved self esteem. Yet, of the nearly 17 million young people who could benefit from being matched with a screened and trained mentor, only about 3 million of them currently benefit from such relationships.

“We must do more to close the mentoring gap. The reality is that there are millions of at risk youth in this country who do not have a strong adult presence in their lives. Mentors play an important role and their efforts can potentially help to reduce juvenile delinquency and the dropout rate,” Congresswoman McCollum added.

U.S. Senators John Kerry and John McCain will introduce a similar resolution later this week. The National Mentoring Month public service campaign seeks to raise awareness through outreach to local governments, businesses, and community and faith-based organizations. The initiative is being led by the Harvard Mentoring Project of the Harvard School of Public Health, MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership, and the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Congresswoman Betty McCollum (MN-4) serves on the House Appropriations & Budget Committees.

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